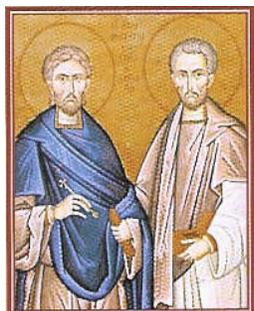


NOVEMBER

Gruden in Old Slavonic; Listopad, Padolist (Falling Leaves) in Little Russian¹.

November 1

† Holy Wonderworkers and Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian



Brothers by birth, they were born in Asia. Their father was a Greek pagan, and their mother, Theodotia, confessed the Christian faith. She became widowed in her youth and led a pious life, accustoming her children to a charitable life and teaching them good works. Brought up in strict piety, Cosmas and Damian from infancy tried to fulfill the law of God, and having come of age, like two candlesticks shone with good deeds. In order to better bring benefits to their neighbor, they were occupied with medical science, learned the healing properties of herbs and plants, and became skilful physicians. From their success of healing the infirm, they "neither received anything from anyone for doing this, for they did this not for the sake of their estate, to enrich themselves with gold and silver, but for the sake of God". They "helped not only people, but also cattle". Having lived in peace and hardworking, they quietly departed to the Lord, and were buried in Fereman in Mesopotamia and "in accordance with their holy repose granting healing flowing in abundance to all"². The commemoration of the Unmercenaries on July 1 and October 17 are separate from them.

Troparion, tone 8

**Holy Unmercenaries and Wonderworkers Cosmas and Damian,
Visit us in our infirmities. //
Freely have you received; freely grant to us.**

Kontakion, tone 2

**Having received the grace of healing,
You extended health to those in need.
Physicians, Most Glorious Wonderworkers:
Through your visits, destroy the insolence of the enemies, //
And through your wonders, heal the world.**

Matins: Gospel: Mk. 6:7-13; sel. 23. Epistle: 1 Cor. 12:27-31, 13:1-8; sel. 153. Gospel: Mt. 10:1, 5-8; sel. 34.

Ven. Theodotia, the mother of the Holy Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian (see above).

Martyr Hermenegild

He was the son of the Goth King Leovigild. His father, being an Arian, tried in every possible way to convert St. Hermenegild to Arianism and, not successful in this, imprisoned him. When, on the feast of Pascha, the Arian bishop was sent to the imprisoned son of the king in order to give him communion, St. Hermenegild refused to receive communion from the heretic and for this he was beheaded in the year 586.

Martyrs Cyriena and Juliana, suffered for Christ during the reign of Maximian in the city of Rosa in Cilicia. After undergoing various abuses these holy Martyrs were burned to death.

Martyrs Caesarius, Dacius and five other martyrs suffered for Christ in Damascus during its capture by the Mohammedans in the Seventh Century. St. Caesarius and Dacius were beheaded. The names of the five martyrs who suffered with them are the following: *Sabbas, Sabinian, Agrippa, Adrian and Thomas*.

Hieromartyr John, bishop and James, presbyter, for their zealous preaching of Christ, were beheaded in Persia during the reign of Shapur II in the Fourth Century.

Monk martyrs James and his two disciples James and Dionysius, suffered for Christ in about the year 1520. Ven. James at first practiced asceticism on Mt. Athos. Later, after a special revelation of God, transferred his ascetic practice to Aetolia. Wonders, done by him, attracted many disciples to him and raised envy among the Turkish fanatics. The latter informed on the Ven. James, as if he gathered rebels around him, and St. James together with his disciples were imprisoned, and then for their firm confession of Christ sentenced to hanging. The Ven. James died before his punishment after prayers, but even after death they still hanged him.

*S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed. 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp 0398-0399
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¹ *November* received its name from novem - nine because it was the 9th month among the Romans. *Gruden (breast)* is called in reference to the breast from frozen earth with snow. In Southern Russia the falling of leaves from trees during this month has given it the name of *Leaf fall (Listopad)*.

² With the pleasing names of Cosmas-Demian as they are called by simple people, connects, based on their lives, to their faith in medical assistance from various infirmities. In particular, our forebears prayed to Sts. Cosmas and Damian for enlightenment of reason to the teaching of reading and writing probably is the basis that the education of children usually began on November 1.